

9 July 1975

The Honorable Stuart Symington
United States Senate
Washington, D. C. 20510

REVIEW STAFF

75-1567

Dear Senator Symington:

The press today carries references to the fact that you were briefed by me in May 1973 on various questionable activities in CIA's past. The press references stem from the public release, approved by the President yesterday, of my report to the President of December 24, 1974, following The New York Times article of December 22nd alleging CIA involvement in a "massive illegal domestic intelligence operation." Annex I to that report was a copy of a memorandum written by me on 29 August 1973. This memorandum refers to the Agency's assembly of information in May 1973 on questionable activities in its past, pursuant to a memorandum dated May 9, 1973, issued by then Director Schlesinger (Annex F of the 24 December report to the President). In this 29 August 1973 memorandum, I referred to the fact that the assembled material was used "in a detailed, page-by-page review of all such information with Senator Symington and Congressman Nedzi, as Chairman of the Senate and House Armed Services Intelligence Subcommittees, respectively." It is this reference that the press based their stories on this morning. I attach a copy of the relevant documents.

You may recall that on 26 May 1973, Mr. Lawrence Houston and I visited you at your apartment at the Watergate to review a collection made by our Inspector General of questionable activities in the Agency's past. We used the Inspector General's summary of these events as the basis for our discussion with you and endeavored to cover all the major elements of the collection, at least in summary form. In response to your several questions, I assured you that any activity beyond CIA's charter which might have taken place in the past would not be permitted to happen again. You will recall that you made a particular point of

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obtaining this commitment from me during my confirmation hearings. In response to this commitment, I developed the memorandum of August 29, 1973, referred to above, which levied specific directives to terminate improper activity by the CIA in the future.

At your convenience I would be glad to show you the original material used to brief you (much of which is still classified), together with the full text of the instructions and other memoranda relating to this matter. The entire package of course has been made available to the Senate Select Committee to Study Governmental Operations With Respect to Intelligence Activities, as well as to the Rockefeller Commission on CIA Activities Within the United States. It was the basis for my report to the President of December 24, 1974, although that of course was limited to the subjects covered in The New York Times article of December 22nd.

If you have any further questions on this matter, I would be pleased to respond.

Sincerely,

/s/ Bill

W. E. Colby
Director

Attachment:

Declassified version of DCI report to the President of 24 Dec 74

WEC:blp

Distribution:

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